Executive Summary

Decades of industrial and municipal discharges have contaminated sediments in the Grand Calumet River and Indiana Harbor Canal. The contaminated sediments continue to affect the water quality of the river and the environment, thus restricting industrial, commercial and recreational uses of the river. This project will remove approximately 121,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment from the West Branch of the Grand Calumet River (WBGCR) affecting complete restoration of a significant portion of the WBGCR. Initial removal of approximately 20,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment will facilitate installation of a force main which will divert the existing Combined Sewer Overflow discharges from the WBGCR and transport the flow to the Hammond CSO reservoir for treatment (fully operational by 2009).

The State Natural Resource Trustees and Hammond Sanitary District (HSD) will match $7.1 Million (35%) to $13.2 Million (65%) of Great Lakes Legacy Act funds to complete the proposed $20.4 Million remediation project. Isolation barriers will enable contaminated sediment removal, force main installation, provide water barriers during sediment removal and capping, and provide restriction of future sediment movement into remediated areas. Hydraulic dredging with water recycling, dewatering of sediments at the HSD sludge lagoons, pretreatment of decanted water, water treatment at the HSD and sediment disposal at commercial landfill are proposed. Dredged portions of the river will be backfilled with suitable materials to achieve acceptable remediation goals and aquatic habitat features.

In summary, this project initiates cleanup efforts by removing sediment, enabling elimination of HSD CSOs and restoring aquatic habitat in the WBGCR. The benefits of the project include reduction in human and ecological risk and improved aquatic habitat and water quality in the river.